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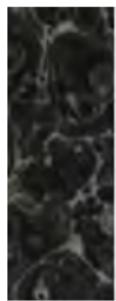
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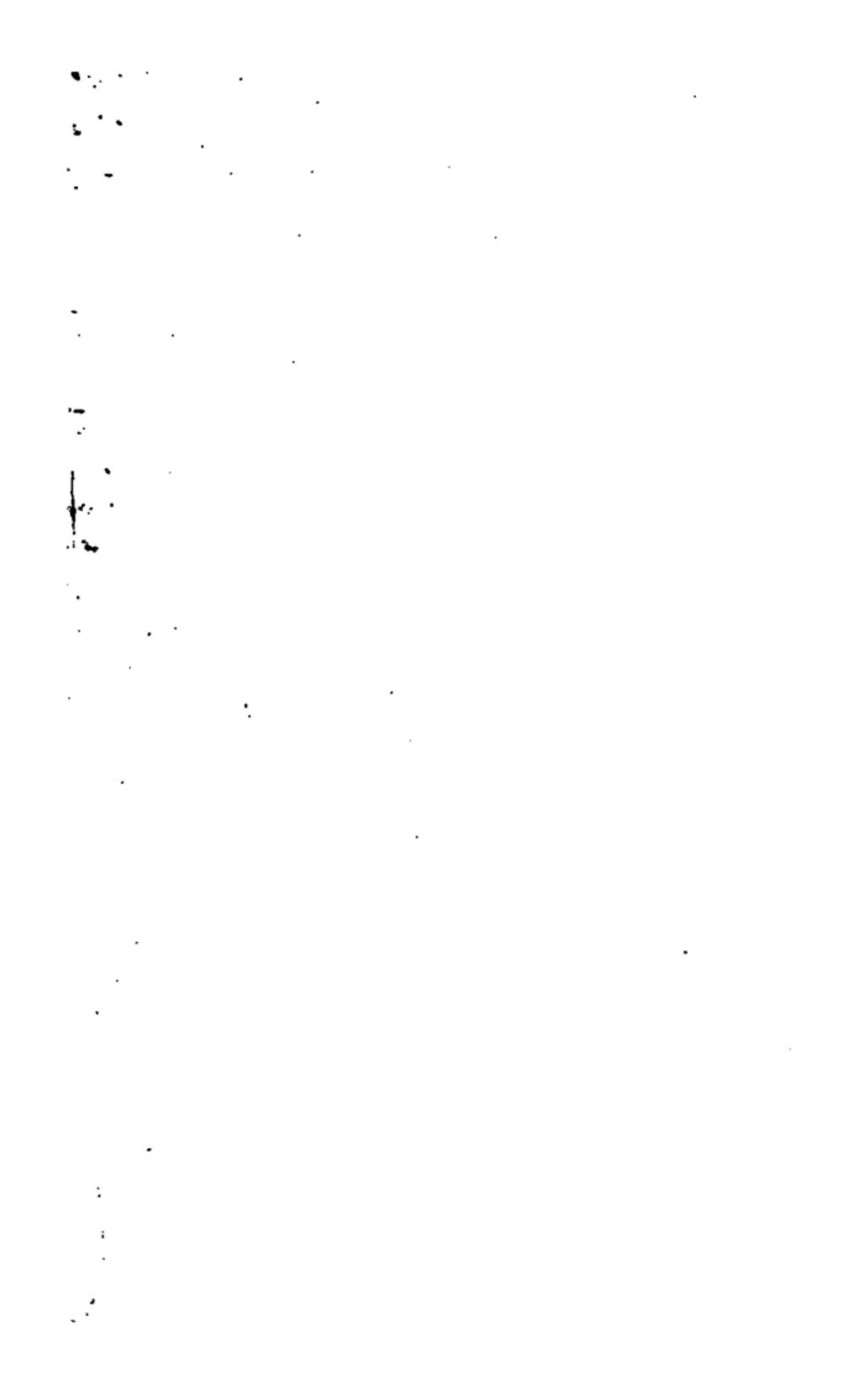
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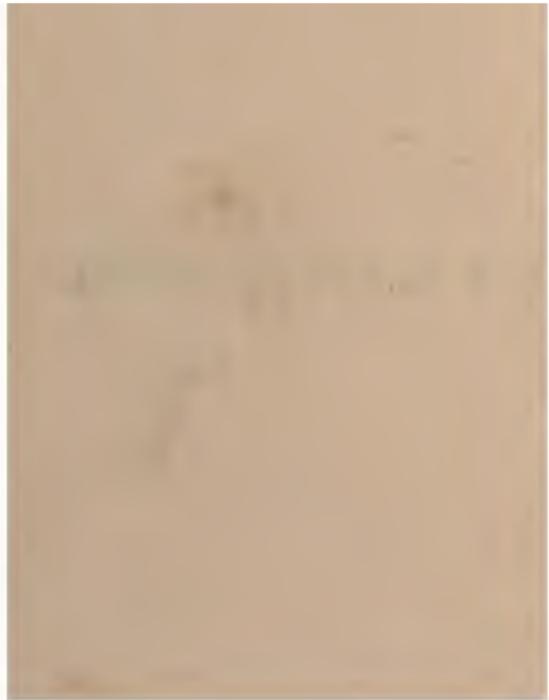








SIX PLAIN SERMONS.



SIX

PLAIN SERMONS.

BY

PHILALETHES.

*"I will follow Truth
Wherever she may lead."*

JOHNSON

21

LONDON:
JOHN HATCHARD AND SON,
187, PICCADILLY.
1841.

646.



P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following Sermons is a Clergyman of the Church of England. The Sermons are some of his very earliest compositions for the pulpit. He is well aware that no merely human composition can add any thing to that perfect standard of truth which is given to mankind in the Holy Scriptures; but he believes that an interchange of thoughts and sentiments

es on a brighter and happier
the proud reminded of the en
human grandeur, the Author's
bition will be gratified, and his v
hes granted.

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SERMON I.

1 JOHN i. 8, 9.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ; if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

THERE is no duty to which men are more frequently invited in Scripture than the great duty of repentance. To this they are sometimes authoritatively bidden, sometimes most graciously invited ; every inducement is held out to convince the understanding, every encouragement is offered to move the heart.

In the words of my text, the whole duty of repentance is, after the usual

646.







SIX PLAIN SERMONS



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faith which forms a part of chris
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Homily of Repentance, says,
who teach repentance witho
faith in our Saviour Jesus Chr
none other but the repentanc
as all the schoolmen do whi
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pass the repentance of Peter. For, first, we read in the gospel that Judas was so sorrowful and heavy, yea, that he was filled with such anguish and vexation of mind for that which he had done, that he could not abide to live any longer. Did he not also, before he hanged himself, make an open confession of his fault, when he said, "I have sinned, betraying the innocent blood?" And verily, this was a very bold confession, which might have brought him to great trouble. For by it, he did lay to the high priests and elders' charge, the shedding of innocent blood, and that they were most abominable murderers. He did also make a certain kind of satisfaction, when he did cast their money unto them again. No such thing do we read of Peter, although he had committed a very heinous sin, and most grievous offence in denying of his Master. We find that he went out and wept

and wept because he could not find what he sought. We read of his satisfaction. But he was received into heaven and the other one did not. He had denied the deity of God; and thereby he did not receive the mercy of God? That, although he sins, acknowledging yet all these sins to bring us to heaven we do steadily the Almighty will, in sake, pardon our trespasses, remembrance

pentance is

incomplete without a reformation of life, and an utter abandonment of all sinful pursuits. “*Wash you,*” says the Lord by the prophet Isaiah, “*put away the evil of your doings;* cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” And again, by the prophet Ezekiel, “If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.” From which passage we learn that, under the head of reformation of life, is necessarily included making restitution to all whom we have injured. “*If the wicked restore the pledge,*” says the Lord, “and give again that he had robbed, he shall live.” And of course this rule extends to making what reparation we are able, to all whom we have injured in any way, whether it be that

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which it is his duty to exercise towards his fellow-men.

My brethren, I have now set before you the great duty of repentance, in all its parts. Which duty every man must perform, before he can enter into the favour of God. But it is not a work to be done once for all, and then no more thought of. On the contrary, it becomes every one of us, each day of his life, before he lays down to rest, to call to his recollection all the sins and negligences of that day; heartily to deplore them; humbly to confess them to Almighty God; sincerely to endeavour to strive, by God's assistance, against similar offences in future; and then to lie down in peace, thankfully believing that the Lord will, for Christ's sake, forgive all his sins.

In speaking of repentance as consisting of these four parts, *viz.* sorrow for sin, confession, a reliance on the pardon which is

warn you to repent ere it be too late, lest ye tarry till your day of grace be past, and find no place for repentance, though ye seek it earnestly with tears. I might tell you of the agonies of a troubled conscience, which sooner or later ye must feel if ye remain impenitent, and for which whosoever feels them can find no balm, without repentance; or I might tell you of the joys of those "who walk in the light, even as He is in the light, and have fellowship one with another :" of which joys there is no participation for the impenitent sinner. But though all these topics are of momentous weight, and are necessary for God's ministers to employ, I choose rather, on this occasion, to content myself with having thus briefly noticed them, and to pass on to one which does sometimes influence men's minds more powerfully, as well as more religiously and more sweetly, than the most awful de-

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preaching of Jesus, gave evide
sincerity by giving half of hi
the poor, and restoring fourf
whom he had wronged. And t
that the Lord pronounced th
words, "This day is salvation
this house."

Another particular which i
well to notice under this hea
confession one to another of th
which we have committed on
another; for an acknowledgme
fault is, in fact, very often a
reparation. Nor can that man

affection did He invite them to return to the duties and privileges of children. " Turn ye," says He by His prophet, " turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel ? " " How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee, O Israel ? My heart is turned within me ; my repentings are kindled together." " Is Ephraim my dear son ? is he a pleasant child ? For since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still : therefore my bowels are troubled for him. I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord."

How sure a proof of this love hath He given in sending His own Son to call sinners to repentance, and to be a propitiation for the sins of the world ! Hath He not also declared to us by the mouth of that Son, that " there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth ? "

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he is yet a great way off, his father runs to meet him, and embraces him, and kisses him, and leads him to his house with joy and honour.²² He does not remind him that he has wasted his substance and forfeited his inheritance ; he does not take him into his house, and make him as one of his hired servants ; he does not clothe him in the garb of humiliation, nor feed him upon the bread of sorrow ; but with the overflowing warmth of returning love he exclaims, “ Bring forth the *best* robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry ; for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found.” And thus, my brethren, thus affectionately, thus joyfully, does our heavenly Father welcome every sinner who feels the misery of having wandered from Him, and turns to Him with penitential



P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following Sermons
is a Clergyman of the Church of England.
The Sermons are some of his very easiest
compositions for the pulpit. He is
desirous that no man should

PLAIN SERMON

PHILADELPHIA.

"I will labour to
make you perfect."

... then, there be
brethren, who have
worldly sins and van
the true and living
any who, having once
way of life, are now
you are invited to draw
“He shall draw nigh
yourselves before Him,
you up.” Put away all
and return unto the Lord
have mercy; and to “I
shall abundantly pardon
deep sorrow in your heart
a godly sorrow, mixed with
mercy.

natural heart is utterly corrupt and depraved ; secondly, that it is from God alone that the remedy for this disorder comes.

May that holy and blessed Spirit, who is promised to all that earnestly ask His aid, so guide and influence our hearts and minds, that those who have never before been made sensible of their lost and ruined condition by nature, may now both see and deplore it, and seek for health from the great Physician of souls : and that those who have already been led to Him may be profitably reminded of their entire dependence on His infinite mercy and loving-kindness !

First, the Scripture teaches that the heart of every human being is full of evil passions, and is averse to holiness. For Moses, speaking of those who lived before the flood, says, that “ God saw the wickedness of man, that it was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts

Him, was, that the pu
were sensible of their
while the Scribes and
themselves righteous.
the publicans and sinne
were sick, and came to
were healed ; but the
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and are thus withheld.

apostle says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind."

These passages of holy writ clearly prove that the corruption is universal and radical; and the language in which holy men, whose lives are recorded in Scripture, spoke of themselves, plainly shows that they were sensible of a deep-rooted evil in their hearts. Thus, the father of the faithful says, "I am but dust and ashes." Holy Job exclaimed, "I abhor myself." David resolved to be "base in his own eyes," and prayed the Lord "to create in him a clean heart," and to deliver him from his "secret sins."

Moreover, the cause which is assigned for this corruption clearly shows that it must be *universal*. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" "How can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

Inheritance; and as we are
same stock, we are all tainted
infection. The malady of
those who have fallen into
and notorious sins, but in
of Adam. In this respect
ference between Jew and
ference between pharisee
no difference between the
wardly moral, and those
vicious. "The Scripture
all under sin."

Yet I fear there are many
they acknowledge that they are
and that they do continually

contrary to God's laws, and that the strength of temptation often leads to a transgression; but they will not perceive that there is a radical corruption, from which these transgressions flow. Yet we have shown that the Scripture declares the *heart* to be *evil*, and that our Lord instructs us that every evil action is evidence of an evil heart. For it is evident that by "evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, false witness, and blasphemy," every kind of sin is represented. The greater here includes the less. If *evil thoughts* proceed from an evil heart, so also does all *uncharitableness*; if *murder* proceed from an evil heart, so also does every degree of *wrath*; if *adultery and fornication* proceed from an evil heart, so also does every *forbidden indulgence*; if *false witness* proceed from an evil heart, so also does every act which is *contrary to truth and justice*; if *blasphemy* proceed from an evil

what the prophet said or it
may be truly applied to us
“The whole head is sick, the
heart faint.”

Such, my brethren, is
our sad condition,—“disorderly
body of sin and death.” Not
more able to extricate ourselves
from this miserable state,
“the Ethiopian is able to change
his skin, or the leopard his spots.”
that we endeavour to conceal
ourselves under the garb of external
holiness. Scripture tells us that
such unholinesses are “as filthy rags.”

This brings us to the second part of our subject, in which we proposed to show that the holiness which we need cometh only from God; that there is no salve which can heal our sore, but that which is administered by the great Physician of souls.

And this we might learn from the Proverbs of Solomon, where it is written, “*The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.*” We may learn it from the prophet Jeremiah, by whose mouth, the Lord, in speaking of the blessings of the new covenant, says, “*I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.*” And again, by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, the Lord says, “*I will put a new spirit within you; I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.*” We may learn it from the complaint of Ephraim,

How mistrustful
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the grace of God which was WITH me." The same apostle writes to the Philippians, "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure;" and to the Hebrews, "*The God of peace,* that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, *make you perfect in every good work to do His will,* working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight." It seems needless to proceed with quotations of this kind. There is scarcely any part of the sacred volume from which we might not bring proofs of this important truth, that "*holiness comes from God alone.*" I have already abundantly proved it. Therefore, lest I should weary you, I shall add no more, except calling your attention once more to the expressive language of my text, "*All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" From the truths which we have now con-

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learnt in private meditation and prayer, but also mould our stubborn *wills* to a conformity with the Divine will. Let us trust wholly in the assistance thus sought; —not partly on God, and partly on ourselves; not partly on the Author of all things, and partly upon dust and ashes; not partly on the Spirit of the Most High, and partly on the purposes of wicked and deceitful hearts;—but let us wholly trust in the Lord, and stay ourselves on our God.

And here, my brethren, observe a second precept which arises from our subject. Since it is God that worketh in us whatever good is wrought in our souls, it becomes us to work out our salvation with *fear* and *trembling*, and to give diligence to make our calling and election sure. If we depend on God to do all things for us, we must implicitly obey the godly motions of His Spirit, we must

the willing minds of

One reflection more
because it is a useful
thought, and may well
under the grief that a
indwelling sin.

We have seen with
and infirmity the nature
passed, and that the
nature is not wholly
who are still in the world,
city not made with hands,
heavens, of which citizens
towards which city the best,
is but a troublesome

He warned the Thessalonians, "Quench not the Spirit;" and to another church he wrote, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God;" and he exhorted his beloved disciple Timothy, "*not to neglect, but to stir up* the gift of God that was in him."

But our subject ought not only to stimulate our exertions by the *fear* of grieving the Spirit of God. The view we have taken of our natural misery and helplessness, ought to raise, in all those who are conscious of having, in any degree, received a new and divine nature, unceasing gratitude for the work of their sanctification. Our souls were sick unto death, and Christ ministered unto us; we were in the prison-house of sin, and Christ visited us; we were poor, and He enriched us with His grace; naked, and He clothed us with His righteousness; hungry, and He fed us with the bread of life. Shall we not, then, gladly render to

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more; the flesh will *no more* lust against the Spirit; but we shall be clothed upon with celestial bodies, and be like unto the Son of God.

And is not this, my brethren, a useful and animating thought amidst the troubles of this present life? May not this well sustain us under the present burden of our own sins, and under the misery of beholding sin in others?

Here, my brethren, I would cease; but I fear that if I did so, there might be some amongst us who would not have received that word of exhortation, which is suitable to *their* wants. Some, I mean, whose christian race is not yet begun; some of Christ's wandering sheep, who are not yet gathered into His fold.

If it be so; if there be any person here present who is not yet in communion with his heavenly Father, to him I would now address myself. To him I would say,

S]

O Lord, righteou

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may have taught you the reason. You have gone about to establish your own righteousness, and therefore you have not obtained the righteousness of God. And the cause of these vain attempts has been *pride*, which has prevented your acknowledging the entire "uncleanness" of your nature, the "desperate wickedness" of your heart. Go then, now, I entreat you; humble yourself before God, and say, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee; but unto us confusion of faces." Fall low before the Almighty, and exclaim, "Unclean! unclean!" Then shall He take away the stony heart from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh; then shall He put His law in your inward parts, and write it in your hearts, according to His most gracious promises, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

it takes away the motives, it substitutes better. And this teaching us to turn ourselves to Almighty God, to exertion, by leading us to contemplate the Lord and Master; it removes us of that sinful and unrighteousness which it supplies us with in ourselves which it supplies us with unfailing confidence.

Our text leads us to the righteousness of God in the character of man. It forms

opposites of the christian character. But when this feeling is combined with a grateful remembrance of the almighty power of God, our heavenly Father, the two together tend to form a temper, which fits us for the stations in which we are placed ; and which, being the work of His Spirit, and existing in those whom He has chosen to be members of the body of His Son, may be not unacceptable to Him in whom we trust.

Men are, in general, prone to activity ; but the motives which animate them are not of the right sort. They are such as these,—self-interest, desire of sensual gratification, love of applause or of power, emulation ; or, at the best, natural affection for earthly relations and friends. Now for men to be *governed* by such motives as these is sinful, and most offensive to Almighty God. A sense of sinfulness and weakness tends to abate, if not wholly



expiring. We may apply the expressions which the prophet uses to three different subjects. First, to the Jewish people, of whom they were originally spoken; secondly, to our own nation; thirdly, to the whole race of man.

And, first, with regard to the Jewish people.—“ Righteousness belongeth unto God.” He ever was unto them as a tender and long-suffering parent. When they were the least of all people, a nation of slaves, condemned to the lowest employments, groaning under heavy tasks, and held in contempt by their oppressors, He interposed for their deliverance. With a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm He brought them out of Egypt. He showed all His signs as a token that He was with them, and inflicted all His plagues upon their oppressors. He enriched His people with spoils, and carried them through the Red Sea as over dry land, and thus led

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to be written and preserved for their instruction; and He gave them holy prophets, and psalmists, to teach them His truth, and to train them to the heavenly employment of celebrating His praise. “He had not dealt so with any nation;” no other had such knowledge of His laws, nor such proofs of His love.

But *they* wantonly abused all these privileges. From the day that He first took them by the hand, and led them out of Egypt, to that on which the prophet made the mournful confession of our text, they had been a stiff-necked, rebellious, and unbelieving people. One miracle of mercy followed another, but left their hearts unchanged. When they suffered want or oppression, *then* they sought Him; or, perhaps, they murmured against Him. But as soon as He had delivered them, and they were full of the good things which His bounty had provided for them, they

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purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and *I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.*" (Isaiah i. 21—26.) Thus did the sins of this people lead to the disclosure of God's unalterable mercy to them.

Take another message to them, which the Lord sent by the prophet Jeremiah. "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? *But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord.* Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers

*Wilt not thou from this time on
Father, thou art the guide*
Will He reserve His anger for
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according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." (Jerem. iii. 12—15.) Thus language taken from the tenderest of earthly relations, was employed by Himself to express God's attachment to His people Israel. He called them His children and His wife. Rebellious children, an unfaithful wife. But their rebellion and unfaithfulness led only to a wholesome chastisement, accompanied by the tenderest expressions of mercy, and invitations to repentance, and promises of final restoration. When the Babylonian captivity was sent as a correction, its termination, at the end of seventy years, was determined and foretold. When the prophet offered up the humble confession of which our text forms a part, this period of seventy years was just expiring, and he began to anticipate the promised deliverance. Well, then, might he, after reviewing the long and dark history of his nation's

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Of us, no,

tokens of His favour than we have. Worldly prosperity has been given in abundance. For centuries past, we have enjoyed the blessing of laws, in general, wise and equal; administered with exactness; affording protection to all classes of subjects. Though surrounding nations have been engaged in the most destructive wars, and though partly our own sins, and partly the sins of other nations, have involved us in a share in these wars, we have felt but little of the miseries which war produces. Our own land has not, in modern times, been the seat of war. Consequently, the oppressive exactions, the wanton destruction of property, the insolence and cruelty which invading armies exercise, and all the horrors which besieged cities experience, have been unknown to us. While the comparatively small number who actually fought the battles of their country, (and their families,) have indeed experienced some of the suf-

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Under the influence
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still more highly favoure
of Christ ..

reformation, the Lord raised up men endowed with wisdom as well as piety, and who united caution with zeal. By means of their labours, the doctrines of the Church were freed from old errors, and not infected with new; and the liturgies and modes of worship were purged of superstitions, but not deprived of due solemnity and external grace, nor caused unnecessarily to vary from the earliest recorded customs of the Church of the New Testament. So highly were the labours of these pious reformers blessed, that those who have exercised the severest scrutiny upon the formularies which they prepared, have never been able to prove that there is one doctrine of God's word which is erroneously stated; or one ordinance really resting upon the authority of the Lord and His apostles which is discarded or misapplied. And as the Lord has thus given us the blessing of His

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writings after their departur
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They have given us in our
translation of the holy Scri
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confidence in the authenticiti
tion of this sacred volume,
for themselves the records
and explaining to others

defended the doctrines of holy Scripture against the insidious assaults of pretended philosophers, the scoffs of profane persons, and the perversions of heretics. They have afforded to every class of persons helps to the study of the Scripture suitable to their respective capacities. They have rendered easy the acquisition of its languages, and of all those branches of historical and scientific knowledge which can illustrate its meaning. They have borrowed whatever is valuable in the works of foreign divines, both ancient and modern ; and, being themselves led by the Spirit of God, they have unfolded the doctrines of his word with reverence and affection, and set forth, as well by their lives as by their preaching, its practical details of holy living.

Such are some of the advantages which the God of all mercy has bestowed on us. Well then may we also exclaim, “ Right-

his ancient people, that "ur
confusion of faces." "We
have committed iniquity,
wickedly, and rebelled, eve
from His precepts and from
neither have we hearkene
vants, which spake in Hi
kings, our princes, and our
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have spent our strength, to
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... connected with the Lord's service proves how much more willing we are to lean upon an arm of flesh than the protection of our God.

What has been our conduct abroad? What purposes have we sought; for what objects have we used our extensive empire? Unspeakable are the things which we might have been instrumental in conveying to the world, if we had employed the influence of our naval power, our wealth, and our superiourity in knowledge and art, for the sake of making known the gospel. No people ever possessed greater opportunity



any thing connected with the Lord's service, proves how much more willing we are to lean upon an arm of flesh than upon the protection of our God.

And what has been our conduct abroad? For what purposes have we sought; for what objects have we used our extensive foreign empire? Unspeakable are the blessings which we might have been instrumental in conveying to the world, if we had employed the influence of our political power, our wealth, and our superiority in knowledge and art, for the purpose of making known the gospel. No people ever possessed greater opportunities of thus glorifying our God, than we have. But we have most sinfully neglected to use them. The nations subject to us have, in some cases, been exterminated by our selfish cruelty; and in others, encouraged in their own superstition, instead of being instructed in the

any God. Oh, that th
oh, that the rocks of th
cover, our nation's sin
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will be judged ; and
thren's blood will be re
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nations shall be gather
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account of himself to C

But, my brethren, it
Jews of old, and of our o
favoured christian nation
that it may be truly sai

laws, which has brought death and sorrow into the world. This alone would be sufficient to vindicate His justice, and to prove our guiltiness and shame. But there has been in His dealings with the world far more than justice. As soon as Adam had sinned, a punishment was, indeed, inflicted; but, at the very time that the sentence of punishment was pronounced, the promise was also given, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." And it is clear that Adam and his immediate posterity actually enjoyed an assurance of the Lord's merciful affection towards them; for we learn from the book of Genesis, that they brought offerings to the Lord, and that when Cain murmured because the Lord had not respect unto his offering, the Lord said unto him, "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*" Thus we see, that though man by his fall

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diately bestowed. And
righteous men enjoyed
They believed God's promise
Him, and were accepted by
Adam and his wife had no
of innocence, so neither did
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creased in the earth; and the
of men's hearts became
nually. In the tenth
family of Noah was the one
God was truly worshipped
punishment for their sins.

sided, the earth was re-peopled by them and their posterity. Thus was it brought about, that once again, the whole existing race of man had the knowledge of God, and assurances of His truth, and justice, and mercy. But the posterity of Noah seem to have corrupted themselves as quickly as those of Adam. They chose to trust in themselves, and to worship idols, and to serve sin, rather than to trust in their God, and worship Him, and serve Him. But the Lord did not destroy *them*. He chose Abraham and his posterity to be His peculiar people, and to keep alive the knowledge of Him in the world. And the other nations He left to follow the devices of their own hearts. Yet even amongst them He never left Himself without a witness, “in that He did good and gave them rain and fruitful seasons, and showed them His eternal power and godhead, by the things which He had created.”

holy acts of which I
no one strive to pall
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But if the heart
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to his spirit ; I would
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been less than he has
to flatter himself

the gospel of that Son. And if it have not been preached to “every creature”; if one of this present generation leave the world without its light having fully shone on him; it is not because the Lord has commanded His gospel to be preached to a few nations only: it is because of the ingratitude, the coldness, the treachery, and the apostasy, of those to whom that gospel has been entrusted.

With gratitude, then, and shame, must we acknowledge that He to the whole race of man; to Adam in Eden; to the world before the flood; to the Jewish Church; to the Christian Church; to the Gentiles; has been a God of righteousness, mercy, and forgiveness: and that *we*, under every dispensation of His mercy, have been ungrateful and rebellious. Righteousness belongeth unto Him; but unto us confusion of face.

Let each of us apply the subject to himself,

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*The wages of sin is death
life, through &*

SIN, my brethren
God's law.

God made me
He made him
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are the unalterable attributes of our God. Thus may we all obtain that sense of sinfulness which is suitable to our real condition, and that confidence towards God which "hath great recompense of reward," and which He encourages all men to entertain, who seek His mercy through Jesus Christ.

and hid themselves amongst the trees of
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sence, are the first r
of sin. Now, too, the
was shown. The se
be a liar; and man's
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sure road to misery.

God had said to Adam
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He made woman also to be an help meet for him. Thus was man surrounded with every means of enjoyment. But one restraint was placed upon him. He was commanded not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Even this one command man disobeyed.

The serpent was permitted to tempt Eve. He put into her mind the blasphemous notion that God had deceived her, and that His threat, "In the day that ye eat thereof ye shall surely die," would not be fulfilled. And the woman hearkened to the serpent's voice; she saw that the tree was pleasant to the eye; she fancied that it was good for food, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; and therefore she transgressed God's law, and did eat. And then in her turn she became a tempter; and at her persuasion her husband imitated her transgression.

And what was the consequence of this

sweat of man's brow became necessary to cause the ground to bring forth such herbs as are fit for man to eat. Sorrow, too, became his portion, and the portion of his wife, for all the days of their lives.

How trifling might we, at first sight, have been inclined to consider this first sin ! There would not appear to be anything in it like what the world calls vice. It was not an act of abominable lust ; it was not drunkenness ; it was not murder ; that ruined the race of Adam : but it had in it that which gives to all these their really sinful character ; it was a transgression of God's law. God had said, "Thou shalt not eat." Man disobeyed, and ate. Therefore that ruin came which God had declared should follow transgression.

Adam, by his transgression, lost his happiness and innocence ; and from that day to this every one of his offspring (excepting Him who is both God and man)

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from following the example of those who perished in the flood. The posterity of Noah soon corrupted themselves; and it is to be feared that in each succeeding generation the number of true worshippers has been but small, in comparison to the number of those who have lived at enmity with or in ignorance of God.

The wages of every successive sin have been in some respects the same as those of the first. Shame, enmity against God, and misery, follow every transgression. Sin has produced, and goes on producing, want. Sin has produced disease. Sin disturbs the peace of families and societies, breaks asunder the bonds of social union, and separates man from man. Sin deprives men of that happiness which they are fitted to enjoy in the exercise of the benevolent and kindly affections, and of that still higher enjoyment which they should find in the worship of their Maker. Sin

darkens the understanding and hardens the heart

And not only so, but the consequences of sin are to be seen in this present world. The original cause of that dissoluteness which it will also cause that seems to consist in being cast into hell and brimstone.

It is of this second apostle seems to speak in this chapter, as he has spoken in the foregoing chapter of serving sin, of men's mortal bodies, so the last.

death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. From which it seems probable that the death here spoken of is not the dissolution of the body, but the second death; for the Romans must experience the first death, whether they served sin or served God, and therefore this death could not be called the consequence of their serving sin.

But whatever may be the apostle's meaning in this passage; whether he allude to the second death, as I have supposed; or is only showing the hatefulness of sin by reminding the Romans that it was by sin that our bodies became subject to decay and dissolution; we know, from the sure warrant of other passages of Scripture, that there *is* a second death, and we know that it is to sin that that second death is threatened. St. John says, "The fearful and unbelieving, and the

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lasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; the lake of fire; weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But though this be the wages of sin, it is not reserved for all who have sinned: there is a gift of God, there is everlasting life. When the wicked are cast into the furnace of fire, the righteous shall shine forth in the kingdom of their Father; they shall enter through the gates into the heavenly city, and eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. When the Son of man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, we shall be divided into two classes: the one class will stand on His left hand, and will receive the wages of sin, which is the second death, everlasting punishment, the lake of fire; the other class will stand on His right hand, and will receive the gift of God, a crown of everlasting life, and will enter into the joy of their Lord. The

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paths of obedience and holiness, and implants in them such a fear and love of God, that they may truly be called God's servants. Those who do not believe in the Son remain in that state of condemnation which is the consequence of sin ; not having the Spirit of God, they are led captive by lusts and passions ; they are the servants, or rather the slaves, of sin ; and Christ's commandments sound in vain in their ears.

You will have remarked, my brethren, that St. Paul calls everlasting life the *gift of God* ; just as in another place he writes, " Not by deeds of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy He saved us." This gift is free, and it is freely offered to all. For the Scripture says, " Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." And the

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freely."*

Seeing, then, my God so rich in mercy, goodness and forbearance, but rather let us obey. His servants If we serve the wages of sin. masters. We can receive the gift seen this evening transgression of God requires of us perfect

reading it carelessly or formally, but, applying every word to ourselves; not passing lightly over those truths which are painful, but pausing to consider them, studying to know ourselves and to see our true character and condition by the light of God's word, and earnestly praying that His Holy Spirit may open the eyes of our understanding, and guide us into all truth. Such a study of the word of God will lead us to continual discoveries of the deceitfulness and wickedness of our hearts. But in all our distresses we must fly to Him for refuge, we must seek strength from Him wherewith to contend against sin and Satan, we must pray Him to take from us every remainder of the heart of stone, and to give us hearts of flesh; we must not resist or grieve His Holy Spirit, but in all things obey His godly motions, and give diligence and fidelity in running our race. In such a race as this, there are

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to cast our minds forward from this ever-changing scene of trial and of sorrow, of vanity and of misery, to a brighter world and a more enduring home.

May God give us grace, my brethren, largely to partake of these joys. But let us remember that they are only to be obtained by obedience to God's commandments, and by entirely submitting our own wills to His. Let us remember that there are no little sins. We have seen, this evening, that the eating of an apple brought ruin upon our first parents, drove them from the garden of Eden, and subjected them to toil, to sorrow, and to death. Let not the tempter deceive us, as he deceived Eve, by inducing us to doubt the truth of God's word. His word has said that "the wages of sin is death, and the gift of God is everlasting life." The way that leads to death is broad, for it is the way of self-indulgence; the gate by

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which all is sacrificed, yield any substantial joys to their professed votaries. The phantom of happiness is continually pursued, but for ever eludes the grasp.

Such, my brethren, are the two paths open before us. Such are they in their end, and such in the journey through them. Choose you which you will take. And if God has given to each of us, as I trust He has, grace to say, with holy Joshua of old, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,"—let us give God thanks for these holy desires. But let us not trust to the sincerity of our hearts, or the strength of our own purposes. Let us not think that we are able to do these things of ourselves, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve Him, without His special grace. Let us at all times call for that grace; and as we go on in our christian race, let us remember that the praise and the power belong not to

**also is the fair
and the holiness
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SERMON V.

1 TIMOTHY i. 5.

Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

THIS sentence seems to have been suggested to St. Paul by the perversions of false teachers, who, instead of labouring to edify the Church, busied themselves with fables and endless genealogies, which afforded matter for angry disputes rather than for godly edification in the faith of Christ. The apostle directs Timothy to avoid all these, and reminds him what is the real end or object of God's commandments, and what should be the object of his own ministerial labours : *viz.* charity,

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which these restrain
promote charity; th
from obedience is—c.
Our corrupt hearts
ritable thoughts and
more we depart from
our sinful inclinations.

Nor can charity towards one another flow from any source except obedience to Almighty God. St. Paul tells us in the text from whence charity springs; "a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."

You remember, my brethren, I doubt not, what is meant by charity in Holy Scripture. Charity is patient and kind, free from envy and boasting and pride; it is modest, not selfish, not easily provoked; it does not willingly think evil of others, it can find no pleasure in men's sins, but rejoices when they believe and obey the truth. It patiently bears affronts and injuries. It believes all the good it can of others. It hopes for their present and eternal welfare. It endures all trials. Such is charity. And it springs, as St. Paul tells us, first, from a pure heart. It is never found in sensual persons. Where there is charity, there must be

from christian charity,
of such men are shown
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when St. Paul speaks of the heart
means merely a heart.

love, cannot exist in a heart that is defiled by such sins, and that, in proportion as they gain the ascendency, charity is expelled.

Secondly, St. Paul teaches us that charity springs from a good conscience. A guilty and defiled conscience is the greatest enemy to charity. The slightest departure from the conduct which we feel to be right, shuts up the avenues of our kindness towards others by oppressing our hearts with the burthen of our own guilty sorrows. When we are vexed with ourselves, we are very apt to be displeased with others. Nothing serves more to make our tempers irritable than the stings of self-reproach. When we groan under the weight of our own sins, we are little able to bear the additional load of sympathizing with the infirmities of others. And if evil habits are persevered in; if the sense of right is long resisted, and at length by

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when we understand His goodness sufferings, and how God gave Him e for us all, and hath called us to wledge of Him, and justified us through faith in His blood; when lieving hearts we ponder these it cannot but be that all envy and hould be banished from our breasts, t the joyful exclamations of our ould be, " If God hath so loved us, ght we also to love one another!" the fountain from which charity ows. A sense of sin, and a hope n through the atoning blood of the , a lively sense of what He has done

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of God. When with true faith we read in the gospels the life and death of the Lord Jesus; when we understand His goodness and His sufferings, and how God gave Him up to die for us all, and hath called us to the knowledge of Him, and justified us freely through faith in His blood; when with believing hearts we ponder these things; it cannot but be that all envy and malice should be banished from our breasts, and that the joyful exclamations of our souls should be, "If God hath so loved us, how ought we also to love one another!" This is the fountain from which charity freely flows. A sense of sin, and a hope of pardon through the atoning blood of the Saviour, a lively sense of what He has done for us, a believing study of His life and doctrines; these diffuse a genial heat, which melts the ice of pride and selfishness, and teaches humbleness, patience, kindness, and compassion.

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from earth to heaven. And thus faith makes the heart pure.

Further, without faith we cannot attain a quiet conscience. Two things are necessary to men's acceptance with God and salvation; *viz.* sanctification and justification. Both of these we receive through faith. Of sanctification I have just spoken, in showing that a pure heart is obtained through faith. But suppose repentance of sin to be wrought in the heart; that is, suppose our sanctification to be begun. Are we thereby justified? Are we just in the sight of God? or do we feel ourselves innocent? Can we stand up and say to God, or to man, or to our own hearts,—“I am guiltless;” “I have nothing to fear from judgment;” “My conscience is quiet;” “The accuser of the saints can lay nothing to my charge?” No, my brethren, a few prayers, a few tears, the amending of some bad habits, a little

All
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have
Doppelgänger
with His
Glasses

Jesus purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

I would now remark how conspicuously our text displays the loving-kindness of Almighty God. The great end of His commandments is to teach us to love one another. *Not* to bring us into bondage; *not* to cast a yoke upon us; but to fit us for happiness, and to make us happy. Obedience seems hard to us. Our habits are corrupt, and the reformation of them is painful; but the fruit of obedience is peace and love. Ought we not, then, to obey with cheerfulness; and to look up to the Lord with gratitude, as well for the laws which He has given for our guidance, as for all His other mercies? Ought we not to delight to render Him that obedience which is so much due to Him, and so conducive to our own true interest?

And let me remark, that peace and love cannot exist amongst men on any other

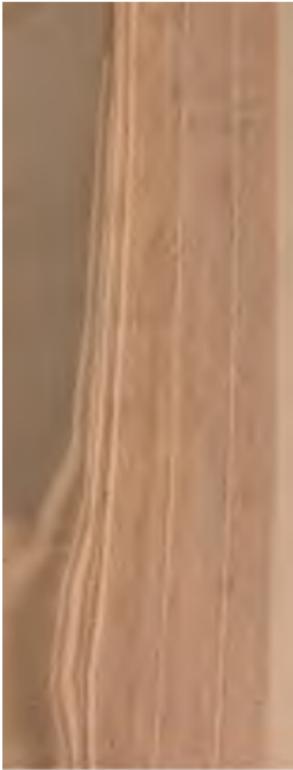
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be the object of all ministers, and of all believers; that is, to promote quietness, peace, and love among all christian people. A test by which we may try the sincerity of our own intentions in anything we have undertaken is, "Have we been actuated by a *spirit of love?*" A test by which to estimate the success of our efforts is, "Have they promoted peace and love?" Have they brought peace to ourselves, and peace to our neighbours? If not, there is reason to fear that there has been something wrong. How many works have been done in the name of God, of which the end has not been charity; which have not sprung from charity in the hearts of those who undertook them, nor have tended to promote charity among others! Even wars, assassinations, and perjuries, have been perpetrated under pretence of religious zeal. What an abomination in the sight of God must these things be!

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our zeal, or even our labours. For knowledge sometimes puffeth up, and it may be sought from a spirit of curiosity or vanity ; and zeal is not always pure ; and labours are not always undertaken from motives which are evidences of grace. But charity, true charity, the charity which the gospel inculcates, is a plant of heavenly origin. It does not grow in the natural heart; it is planted in man only by grace, and it needs continually to be watered from above.

If, then, we are daily becoming more charitable; *i.e.* more patient and kind; more free from envy, boasting, and pride; less presumptuous, less selfish, less prone to anger; if we bear affronts more meekly; and are less willing to think evil of others, and take more pleasure in hearing of the good that is done by our neighbours; these are proofs that the Lord is with us, and that we are travelling towards Sion. If we examine ourselves on this subject we



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alms of all such things as ye have," said also, "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" "Resist not evil;" "Be content with such things as ye have;" "Be at peace one with another;" "Let every man be slow to wrath."

Let *us*, then, covet earnestly this best gift. Let us not be content to have a hope in Christ, which our slight progress in holiness, and our many sins, render faint, and almost extinguish; but let us press towards the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus, forgetting those things which are behind, and pressing onwards to those things which are before. When we live in charity, then have we an assurance of God's favour, and of our everlasting peace; and even now we have heavenly joys begun on earth. But when pride and envy and wrath reign in us, how is our joy banished and our faith tried!

May the Lord bestow a larger measure

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David a remarkable example of this grace. An affectionate confidence in the Lord's protection and mercy accompanied him through all the varied scenes of his life. It may be profitable for me briefly to mention a few instances in which he gave evidence of having such a principle in him.

While yet a youth, trusting in the protection of the living God, he encountered the Philistine Goliath. Although he was so terrible that at the sight of him all the men of Israel fled and were sore afraid, David, with his staff and sling, and five smooth pebbles out of the brook, feared not to meet him, because he was confident that "He who delivered him out of the paw of the lion and the bear, would make the uncircumcised Philistine as one of them." Throughout the bitter and long-continued persecutions which he experienced at the hand of Saul, he fled to God

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When David was delivered from all these troubles, and exalted to the kingdom, and raised to great power and glory, and had been victorious over all his enemies, he did not forget God, who had done so great things for him ; but made melody in his heart continually, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and praised the Lord with his whole heart.

The quickness, too, of David's repentance, after his great transgression, is a proof of his trust in God. He saw the enormity of his crime, but he did not therefore doubt that it might be pardoned ; he had a sure hope in God's mercy ; he fled to God "to hide him ;" he besought the Lord to "wash him from his iniquity, and cleanse him from his sin."

Again, when his heart was overwhelmed with the afflictions which fell upon him in

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Whenever any one is full of alarm for the future, or of murmuring and discontent in consequence of events which Providence has brought upon him, he gives evidence of not having an influential sense of the providence, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Lord. Our blessed Lord has commanded us to take no care for the morrow; by which we must not suppose that prudence and diligence in conducting our affairs are condemned, but only that all corroding care for the future is forbidden; and that we are instructed to commit ourselves, our souls, and our bodies, into the hands of our heavenly Father, with undoubting confidence in His goodness.

But, perhaps, my brethren, the petty concerns of daily life form a severer trial of our confidence in God, than those greater accidents which occur but seldom. Suppose that when a man is engaged in his daily occupation, (whatever it may be,) L 3

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and who was tempted in all things like as we are, was tried in this respect as sorely as in any. While he laboured to bring the lost sheep of the house of Israel to the knowledge of the truth; while he patiently reasoned with them, and appealed to the miracles which he wrought, to the testimony of John, to the testimony of the prophets, and to the testimony of His Father, in proof of His being the Messias; while He affectionately exhorted them to come unto Him, and declared that those who came to Him He would in no wise cast out; while He wept over the calamities which He foresaw that their wickedness was bringing upon them; the answers of those whom He thus earnestly addressed, were, "He is mad, why hear ye Him?" "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil;" "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils;" and they "took up stones to cast at Him." Nor was it only from

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I now proceed further to remark, that that man cannot be sincerely trusting in God, who does not sincerely desire to keep God's commandments. This is a condition constantly attached to his promises. "All the paths of the Lord," says the Psalmist, "are mercy and truth, to such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." They are "the meek," whom the Lord guides; they are "the righteous," whom the Lord delivers. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them," saith our Lord, "he it is that loveth me." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "He that keepeth his commandments," writes St. John, "dwelleth in Him, and He in him." "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, that

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Again, suppose a man to be sick, and his life in imminent danger, and that he sends for a skilful physician. If really aware of his danger, and conscious of his inability to perform his own cure, will he not follow the directions of his physician? Should we not count him insane if we saw him neglecting the medicines and the regimen prescribed by his physician, and yet heard him declare that he had no doubt of his recovery, because his physician was so skilful; that he knew his physician was able to cure such disorders as his, and therefore he doubted not that he would cure him? My brethren, we should count such a one to be insane. But not less insane is he who professes to trust in God, and yet disregards God's commandments.

We are all on a journey, in which we must encounter many difficulties, and be beset by many dangers. We know not our own way; we are unable to defend ourselves.

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First, temporal prosperity is promised to those who trust in God. "My son," says the wise man, "forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments : *for length of days, and long life and peace, shall they add unto thee.*" "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil. *It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*" "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of thine increase ; *so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*" Speaking of wisdom, (the beginning of which is the fear of the Lord,) the same inspired author writes, that length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour." "Blessed is the man," says the Psalmist, "that feareth the Lord. His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house." Our Lord Himself declares that there is "no man that hath left



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meekness, temperance; these are the health of the mind, the riches of the soul. These are the chief rewards of those who keep God's commandments. They are not, it is true, bestowed at once, but gradually. From the time that the seeds of spiritual life are first quickened in the soul; or, which is the same thing, from the time that the fear of the Lord is first received into the heart; we gradually grow in grace. We make progress in holiness, and therefore in happiness. The fetters of that chain of sin in which we were tied and bound are one by one broken off; and as we become more willing and obedient servants of the Lord, we experience more of that perfect freedom which is to be found only in His service.

Those who have not the fear of the Lord before their eyes, follow their own lusts and passions. The law in their members compels them to do many things

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envy ; there is misery in
emulation, and hatred ; there
is superstition, and ignorance of
this misery Jesus Christ delivered
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Him," to those who "see the Son and believe on Him;" to those who "hear His voice and follow Him," and continue "faithful unto death."

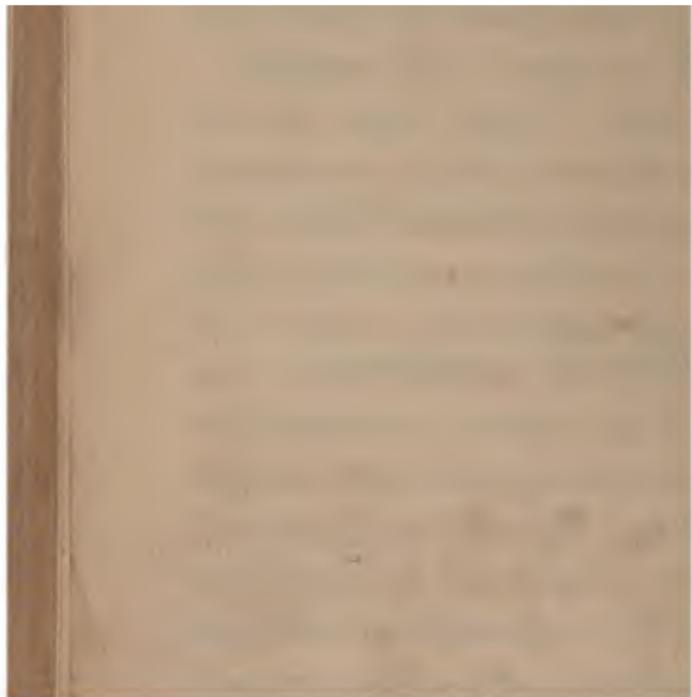
To them it is promised that the Lord the righteous Judge shall give them a crown of life in the great day; that He shall receive them into His everlasting kingdom, and give them to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

This hope, therefore, is the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. Even though our way of life be prosperous, and though the Spirit of Christ do work invisibly in us, mortifying the deeds of the flesh and our members, which are upon the earth, and drawing up our minds to high and heavenly things; yet are we subject to temptations and afflictions, which interrupt our present peace. But they who have fled to Christ for refuge, ever hold fast the hope of that

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